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A

# LETTER

TO

## R. B. GABRIEL, D.D.

IN ANSWER TO

# FACTS

RELATING TO THE

## Rev. Dr. WHITE's Bampton Lectures,

BY

A MEMBER OF ONE OF THE UNIVERSITIES.

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A

# LETTER

TO

## R. B. GABRIEL, D. D.

*&c. &c.*

REVEREND SIR,

YOU have been pleaſed at laſt to favor the public with your long promiſed, and univerſally expected, pamphlet on Dr. White; and amongſt thoſe who may ſtand forward to acknowledge your condeſcenſion, I flatter myſelf my obſervations will not appear either deſtitute of reſpect to you, or proſtituted to calumny. To the profeſſed character of the divine, you ſeem to have

added the feelings of the man; and while you appear, on your own declaration, anxious to vindicate your ſuppoſed injured reputation in the eyes of the world, you unfortunately ſacrifice your profeſſions of candor to the ſhrine of private reſentment, and the dictates of the vindictive ſpirit. I am ſorry the peruſal of your *Facts* has made ſuch an impreſſion on the mind of an impartial reader; of a perſon who not reluctantly will unſheath his ſword in the defence of injured merit, or aſſaulted innocence, whether it be in Dr. White, or his antagoniſts.

Time is required finally to deſtroy the veil which covers the myſteries of ſuperſtition; and it would be a dangerous attempt to extirpate, at one blow, the pageantry that commands the admiration and reverence of a bigoted nation in the moments of ignorance and barbariſm; but the preſent age affords a more peaceful ſcene; and the hero, whoſe labours have been rewarded with the palm of victory, the Goliah of chriſtian learning, is ſuddenly ſpoiled of his blooming honours, and defeated by the attacks of an

inſignificant individual. Yet not ſo, Dr. Gabriel; allow others time to examine facts as well as yourſelf, and do not preſume to impoſe upon the public opinion, by a haſty intruſion of your prejudices and mercenary ſentiments. The Bampton Lectures have gained too much celebrity, that the preacher ſhould be forſaken on the firſt appearance of oppoſition, or that he ſhould be condemned unheard, to the ignominy which your pen has attempted to throw upon him. It may be ſaid, that your attack is too feeble, and too much the effuſion of reſentment, tempered with jealouſy, to merit the attention of the public; but we know that the hiſtorian mentions the little trochilus, becauſe he accompanies the huge crocodile; and the aſtronomer ſpeaks of the ſpots of the ſun, becauſe they obſcure the diſc of that luminary. So far your compoſition will be entitled to our obſervation; and we will forget it is the production of a Divine, whoſe meekneſs ought to be exemplary, whoſe benevolence ought to be unbounded, and whoſe charitable ſentiments ought to be expreſſed in the circles of ſociety as much as they are

thundered from the pulpit. We muſt from beginning to end conſider it as the production of a man of honour, whoſe feelings are of ſuch delicate, ſuch exquiſite texture, that the ſmalleſt colliſion calls for the exertion of all its dormant powers, and whoſe reſentment challenges the ſtrongeſt as well as the feebleſt antagoniſts.

There is a medium between candor and ſeverity, which, if you had obſerved, might have rendered your accuſation of Dr. White more reſpectable, if not more authentic; but to ſuch rules Dr. Gabriel is a total ſtranger. Superior to common rules, he flies from the marks which decency ought to have preſcribed him; and forgetful of his former profeſſions of friendſhip, forgetful of his character, and regardleſs of the reſpect which he owes to the public in general as an individual, and now as a writer, he wields the weapons of vengeance without producing any ſufficient proofs of provocation, and invites us to an entertainment prepared with malice, adorned with cunning, and ſeaſoned with bitterneſs. There is little to be ſaid

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in defence of ſuch proceedings as theſe, Dr. Gabriel; they bear their own condemnation on their head; and not all the waters of the Atlantic would waſh away the ſpot, the ignominious ſpot, which you have fixed upon your character.

I would not object ſo much to your appearance before the awful and impartial tribunal of the public, as to the manner in which you introduce yourſelf. Full of your own conceit, and proud of your titles and preferment, you ruſh forward to the crimination of a man who is as much an ornament to literature, as you are its diſgrace; and who is as much the friend and the favourite of the public, as you are becoming its enemy and its abomination.

With the determined reſolution to ſtigmatize the Arabic Profeſſor, you begin to panegyrize his conduct, and tell us you poſſeſs as much veneration for his character, as is due to uncommon talents, and ſuperiority of genius. We, moſt learned Doctor, we know, as well as yourſelf, how much

much Dr. White deſerves the approbation of the world; and with what gratitude, I might perhaps add reverence, every thing is received that drops from his pen. Do not ſuppoſe you deſtroy any part of that great character he enjoys; he receives more additional ſplendor from your malevolent attacks; and among a croud we are ſenſible that the dog that barks, diſtinguiſhes his maſter more than he that fawns. Excuſe the compariſon; though I know if you reſent it, it is a proof that it is juſt and applicable.

To ſay you "are not actuated by motives "of ill will to Dr. White," is a piece of falſehood which the moſt candid and impartial peruſal of your *Facts* will evince. Every page, and indeed every word, ſpeaks loudly for itſelf; and the man who pleads neceſſity, and "the indiſpenſible and honourable pur-"poſe of vindicating himſelf," moſt unerringly betrays a harſh and wanton deſign, to injure the reputation of the Profeſſor.

I congratulate

I congratulate you, Dr. Gabriel, that you can ſay, not without honeſt pride, that your acquaintance are numerous and reſpectable. It is a piece of vanity, which few men perhaps, except yourſelf, would have betrayed; but we muſt ſuppoſe you deemed ſuch information neceſſary for the public, that you might not be confounded with the herd of inferior writers; but unfortunately, public juſtice knows no ſuch exemptions. I do not believe that thoſe numerous friends, whoſe good opinion you tell us you have not only merited, but obtained, can rely much on the eſteem of a perſon whoſe officiouſneſs tends to ſuch purpoſes, and who inſinuates himſelf into the good graces of the world, merely to betray the confidence which is repoſed in him. An acquaintance with ſuch a character ought rather to be ſhunned than courted; for he little deſerves the appellation of friend, or the name of the moſt diſtant acquaintance, who on the moſt trifling provocations, the moſt frivilous pretences, becomes the bittereſt enemy; reveals what ought to be ſacred, and canvaſſes half the kingdom to ſee whether he cannot find

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ſome like himſelf, equally reſentful, equally invidious, to corroborate his malevolent aſſertions.

It was needleſs, Dr. Gabriel, to tell us you are not ambitious of being conſidered as a man of great learning; the world was long ago acquainted that, even ſhould you be ambitious to ſhine as a writer, and to tranſmit your name to poſterity for works of genius and refined literature, you were moſt materially deficient in abilities and that neceſſary ſtuff which a celebrated writer moſt emphatically ſtiles "a ſound under-"ſtanding." It is not eaſy to act the hero of the tale, but the moſt common attainments are not even requiſite to perform the part of the fool: which of theſe two moſt becomes your character, your conſciouſneſs of your own abilities, or the ſpecimens with which you have favoured us, will beſt intimate.

I ſhould be ſorry here to influence the deciſion of the public, when ſuch inconteſtible proofs

proofs of your performance are ſubmitted to their judgment, their impartiality, and which will at laſt be branded with the merited cenſure of the whole kingdom.

The provocations which you ſay you have received are malevolent paragraphs in the papers, which you have collected with the moſt minute attention, more I preſume from your vanity to ſay your name is mentioned with that of a Badcock, a Parr, and a White, than as a proof of injurious attacks. Believe me, Doctor, the newſpapers, as far as I ſee from your quotations, are moſt faithful mirrors, in which you can behold your character drawn without flattery, and diſplayed with no degree of malice or miſrepreſentation. You certainly muſt be conſcious of your own inabilities to pleaſe, and ſenſible of your indolence and ſhameful inactivity, when you ſuppoſe the author of the paragraph you quote (page 8) applies the "heavy drone of the church" to you. The picture, if it be ſo, we muſt impartially confeſs to be excellent; it is drawn with ſuch fidelity that

each trait is conſpicuous, each word appoſite, and each application fortunate.

You will no doubt excuſe me, Doctor, if I ſay that the writers of all the paragraphs were actuated by no malice,—they were no ſecret aſſaſſins,—they carried no dagger with them,—nor, as you would believe, did they bring againſt your candour and veracity groſs or cruel charges. You miſtake their meaning; they have behaved with ſuch tenderneſs, and have ſhewn ſo much delicacy towards you, that were you endowed with more generoſity of mind, or with more liberal principles, I would almoſt flatter you by ſaying that the whole is an encomium upon your great virtues, and a tribute gratefully paid to your charitable and humane ſentiments.

To tell you the truth, Doctor Gabriel, I long ſuſpected, before you condeſcended to appear before the public, that at leaſt ſome one of your friends, if not yourſelf, was the author of the letter you quote in the 16th page; and indeed now, upon a cloſer examination,

nation, I can declare that your note ſeems to ſay as much. Where is the man that will complain of the virulence, of the cruelty, of the inhumanity of his antagoniſts, and at the ſame time compliment them for their courteouſneſs and liberal expreſſions? Yet Doctor Gabriel is the man—he talks of the polite and of the liberal manner with which he is treated, and by another effuſion of pride and vanity, he tells us what is written by himſelf, or at leaſt with his approbation, ought to be ſeparated from ſlanderous paragraphs. Your hypocriſy, Dr. Gabriel, is as evident as your malevolence; and while you refer your reader from note to note, and page to page, with the intention, as you perfidiouſly inſinuate, to omit every unhandſome expreſſion, and as your errata mark, every unwelcome memento, relating to Dr. White, your illiberality is the more apparent, and your want of candor the more inexcuſable. By concealing what ought to be revealed, you attempt to throw a greater, and if poſſible a more indelible ſtigma on the character of the Arabic Profeſſor, and be-

tray the inveterate enemy under the garb of the compaſſionate friend.

I will ſupply what you have omitted in the letter that appeared in the General Evening Poſt, ſigned by "a friend to merit," and I am ſure every one will be ſenſible that there is leſs ſlander in the words than every page of your pamphlet exhibits.—"If it be "ſo," continues the writer, "the latter "gentleman (Dr. White) has been guilty "of a literary impoſture not leſs infamous "than that of Lauder, but the ſame ſucceſs "has not attended both. Lauder became a "voluntary exile from his country, and pe-"riſhed abroad in poverty and oblivion; "Dr. White is rewarded as the ſuppoſed "author of the admirable ſermons with dig-"nity and opulence in the church.—If he "be ſo much indebted, as it is ſaid, to the "celebrated Badcock, whoſe early death "genius and learning will very long de-"plore, ſtrip him of his borrowed fame. If "you convict him of the charge, can he "read without bluſhing the following dedi-"cation of his book?"

"To

" To his Grace
JOHN MOORE, D.D.
Lord Archbiſhop of Canterbury,
by whoſe advice the Author
originally commenced
his oriental ſtudies,
and under whoſe patronage
he hath continued to purſue them,
this edition of a Work,
the reſult of thoſe ſtudies,
is reſpectfully inſcribed,
by his Grace's,
moſt obliged and grateful ſervant,
JOSEPH WHITE."

Forgive me, Doctor, if again I ſuſpect the above-mentioned letter, with that you have tranſcribed from the Diary, is the effuſion of your brain, or the production of one of thoſe friends whom your officiouſneſs retains ſeemingly devoted to your views. Your readineſs to communicate what you have written, or the plans you have propoſed,

poſed, is ſo great and ſo remarkable, that even your warmeſt friends are aſtoniſhed at your impudence, and lament that Dr. Gabriel ſhould be the panegyriſt of his own nonſenſe, and admire what is ſecretly expoſed to ridicule by others with as much ſerioufneſs as the fond mother cheriſhes the deformed monſter which all around deem hideous and unnatural.

The only mode which could poſſibly, in a limited ſenſe, condemn, you have had ſufficient foreſight to adopt, and to the publication of Dr. White's Letters we are more indebted for the light we receive from the peruſal of your *Facts* than from what your invidiouſneſs has aſſerted, or your miſrepreſentations endeavoured to authenticate.

The reader, however prejudiced he may be by the innuendos and malignant reflections of the Rector of Hanworth, finds with pleaſure, that the perſon whom the Univerſity appointed to preach the Bampton Lectures in the year 1784 is not unworthy of their choice. The friendſhip which exiſted

exiſted between Badcock and the Profeſſor, ſeems not, in ſpite of your inſinuations, to have originated from the ſolicitations or importunate intruſions of the latter; and if we acknowledge that Dr. White was indebted to the Curate of South Molton for many ſentences or even pages in his Lectures, we muſt confeſs that the aſſiſtance, however trifling, was unſolicited, the confidence mutual and the intercourſe friendly. By procuring the appointment of preacher, Dr. White at leaſt ſhowed he was equal to the undertaking; and if he actually craved the aſſiſtance of Badcock, it was more to approve than poliſh, and more to criticiſe what was done than to compoſe. We are to admire him that planned, more than him who executed; and the taſte and refinement of every age will recollect with gratitude the vaſtneſs of ſoul that planned the ſplended edifice, while the labours of the workman however ingenious, are forgotten, and his efforts ſink in oblivion. This is an aſſertion you cannot deny. The Letters of the Profeſſor ſpeak for themſelves,

ſelves, and the moſt candid examination will diſcover, that far from being the author of the Bampton Lectures, Badcock merely aſſiſted White in the compoſition of two or three of the ſermons, and worked upon the materials, with which his friend had ſupplied him.

If Dr. White expreſſed his gratitude in warm terms, if he told his friend, that "without him the work could not have been produced, that all his proſpects muſt have been for ever cloſed, and that to him he was indebted for the celebrity of the ſermons," we are to aſcribe ſuch ſentiments to the fervor of friendſhip; and we muſt ſay, with you, "that his gratitude overpowered the ſuggeſtions of his judgment, and that he gave Mr. Badcock more praiſe than he ſeriouſly believed he deſerved."

He who is accquainted with you, Dr. Gabriel, will not heſitate to declare, that profeſſions are in general warmer than they are intended, and that we ought to beware of him whoſe impudence panegyrize

rizes our character, and elevates our abilities: that in the moments of inattention, he may depreſs them with more ſucceſs, and render our confuſion more viſible and irreparable.

It may be in me a failing of human nature,—it may be a timidity and diſtruſt inherent in the mind of man; but, Dr. Gabriel, I have ever been taught to conſider panegyrics in an inveterate enemy, as a greater proof of perfidy, and I have always believed, that he who uſes moſt diſſimulation is imployed in what I would call, in modern language, in finding a more genteel and polite way to cut my throat.

It would require more art than I imagine you ever poſſeſſed to cloathe your ſentiments in the language of admiration, and to conceal from the world you are one of Dr. White's enemies, when you pretend to be actuated by motives of honour and ſelf defence. Your real friends, if there are any beings of that denomination in the world, will not be inſenſible of the impro-

priety of your late conduct; and they will naturally ſuſpect that the feelings of ſhame are blunted, the reproaches of conſcience vaniſhed, and the fear of puniſhment and retribution extinguiſhed by the ſuperior powers of impudence, the dictates of ill will, and the blindneſs of reſentment.

It is well for the honour of the country, it is fortunate for the cauſe of literature, and for the defence of true genius, that there is alive in the nation a ſpirit of emulation, a beam of diſcernment, and a tincture of uncorrupted taſte; and indeed ſhould the Bampton Lecturer be abandoned in the preſent moment to the wild fury and extravagance of his enemies, there will ariſe from his fallen honours thouſands to echo his praiſe, and pour the phial of indignation and contempt on thoſe that, like you, think, they cannot be diſtinguiſhed but by attacking merit, and cenſuring perfection.

The bounty of Providence has wiſely ordained, that the fixt depravity of the heart ſhould

ſhould have often to ſtruggle with want of capacity, and be conquered by a deficiency of common ſenſe, or elſe the meritorious might have as much reaſon as the illuſtrious Profeſſor to complain of the tyranny of impertinence, and the galling yoke of illiberality and malevolence.

We have, Sir, to lament for your own ſake you were not ſatisfied with the little conſequence which nature or chance gave you; you might have lived the reſt of your days in obſcurity, and the indignation which now cannot but fall upon your ambition and jealouſy, would have been unknown in the circles of life; and if you deſerved any attention from the public, contempt would have been the only and the beſt of rewards, and diſregard the greateſt of favours. Your paſſions have now hurried you to exhibit in a more extenſive theatre, and if the awkwardneſs which you betray, and the reluctance you wiſhed to ſhield yourſelf with, begin to alarm your fears, and to awaken remorſe, do not think that your exit will be ſo eaſy, or your at-

tempts ſo unnoticed, as cowardice might fondly hope. Something, Dr. Gabriel, muſt be paid for your temerity, and if you cannot gain the applauſe of thoſe whom you flattered yourſelf to influence, at leaſt you cannot be diſſatisfied to receive what they deem due to your actions, public cenſure, and univerſal abhorrence.

It is in vain to tell us that the delay of your publication aroſe not from diſtruſt, but from delicacy and tenderneſs to Dr. White; the world is ſenſible no ſuch ſcruples exiſted within you, or elſe why ſhould months of labour and toil be employed in the wonderful production of a pamphlet, which a peruſal of two minutes condemns with indignation. What degree of light have you thrown upon the ſubject, or what aſſiſtance has the public received from the whiſpers of malice, and the inſinuations of ſlander? It never was a profound ſecret that Badcock had ſeen Dr. White's Lectures, or that he had even aſſiſted him in the compoſition; therefore it cannot be doubted but that much

much impudence is required, and more haughtineſs of heart, to tell the reader he was in darkneſs till you brilliantly roſe in the horizon of learning, and that the clouds of ignorance which hovered round him have been diſpelled by your matchleſs publication. It is taking great and unprecedented liberties with the judgment, the taſte, and diſcernment of the public; and I know not what apology ſuch an aſſertion could offer in its vindication, except we are told that arrogance knows no laws, and that the petulant and the vain too often claim an abſolute dominion over the underſtanding of the learned, as well as over the ſuſpicions of the miſinformed.

The encomiums which you have been pleaſed to pay to Badcock, reverend Doctor, were needleſs; his reputation will never be eſtabliſhed with more ſecurity, by your feeble efforts; and for you to pay him a compliment, is the ſame as if you added a drop of water to the unfathomable ocean.

Your

Your vanity, no doubt, extorted this tribute from your pen, and you wiſhed your reader to know, that though you had abuſed the friendſhip of one of the ornaments of literature, yet the ſudden and lamentable deceaſe of the other had prevented your embittering that ſeeming acquaintance and familiarity which ſix months had not cemented, and yet ſcarcely begun. Had the celebrated Curate of South Molton no other advocate than yourſelf to eternize his merits, did his fame depend on your exertions ſolely, his name would ſoon be forgotten; the ignorance of the panegyriſt would haſten the fall of his glory, and the genius of Badcock, were he to riſe from his tomb, would ſhed a tear on the monument which covers his bones, and lament, with a ſigh, that his epitaph was to be written by one of the ſons of ſtupidity.

You cannot ſuppoſe that your readers will be apt to ſpeak of the liberality of your ſentiments, when you tell them that Dr. White

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is a mere child, and even unacquainted with the ordinary affairs of the world; and that with all his powers, and all his boaſted attainments, he ſeldom attempts to excel or even to ſhine in converſation; an accompliſhment which you tell us, exultingly, was brilliant and remarkable in Badcock.

Surely, Doctor, to ſhine in converſation is no proof of ſuperior genius; and could I appeal to you with propriety, I would quote you as an inſtance. The ſober contemplating mind, is not always ready to receive the ſudden and vivid impreſſions of gaiety; ſullenneſs of diſpoſition, and not volatility and fickleneſs of mind, is the infallible characteriſtic of the philoſopher; and when we recollect that the immortal Newton was a child for his abſence of mind, and the celebrated Johnſon a bear for his aukwardneſs in company, and that he was domineering in his converſation, we are apt to laugh at the concluſion you wiſh to make, and that attempt to aſſert that the modeſty and diffi-

dence

dence of the Laudian Profeſſor are proofs of his inability to write the Bampton Lectures. Such frivolous objections can never be admitted, and it is to be lamented that your partiality has carried you to make ſo abſurd and unwarrantable a declaration.

Dr. White, you may well imagine, never intended his letters to the deceaſed Badcock for public criticiſm, much leſs to be examined by the officious and the ſlandering; but every page, nay, every ſentence, and every word, indicate that vigour of mind, that perſpicuity of expreſſion and ſublimity of thought, which conſtitute in the higheſt and moſt perfect degree the man of ſenſe, the polite ſcholar, and the feeling chriſtian. I have peruſed them with pleaſure again and again, and the impreſſion which the firſt reading made has been more deeply fixed by the ſecond peruſal. It would be uſeleſs to quote any one paſſage to illuſtrate this aſſertion; but the reader and yourſelf, Doctor, will excuſe my partiality if I tranſcribe the following letter. It is addreſſed

to

to Miſs Badcock, and is dated Oxford, May 28, 1783.

" Dear Miſs Badcock,

" I have juſt read in the public papers, " with inexpreſſible grief, that your good " brother and my worthy friend is no more. " —Nothing could poſſibly have been a " greater ſhock to me, as I had juſt formed " (only a day or two ago) the plan of com- " ing into Devonſhire as ſoon as term was " out, and of ſpending a fortnight with " him at South Molton in the beginning of " July. But human life, we all feelingly " know, is expoſed to the moſt bitter diſap- " pointments.

" I moſt ſincerely condole with you on " this melancholy occaſion. You have loſt " the beſt of brothers—I have loſt a moſt " ſincere and valuable friend — learning " has loſt one of her brighteſt orna- " ments, and religion one of her ableſt " defenders.

" What adds particularly to my concern " is, that I have not been lately ſo punctual " a correſpondent to your good brother, as he " had reaſon to expect; this matter I hoped " to have cleared up entirely to his ſatisfac- " tion in my viſit in July; but, alas! it is " now too late.

" I now take the liberty of requeſting a " great favour from you. You know there " was a long correſpondence between your " brother and me, in which ſome things " paſſed entirely of a confidential nature. " Might I requeſt the favour of you to " collect together from his manuſcripts, *all* " *the papers of every kind that are in my* " *hand-writing, and to keep them in your own* " *poſſeſſion till the beginning of July*, when I " ſhall be in Devonſhire, and ſhall wait upon " you with whatever I poſſeſs *belonging* to " your brother. In doing this, you will " render me an infinite ſervice.

" I requeſt

" I requeſt the favour of a line from " you, addreſſed to me at Wadham Col- " lege, Oxford,

" And am,

" Dear Miſs Badcock,

" Your very obliged, and

" Moſt obedient ſervant,

" J. WHITE."

I have followed your example, Doctor, in uſing the Italics; but I only wiſh to learn, whether a perſon who is engaged in a good cauſe, who boaſts of the integrity of his ſentiments, and the uprightneſs of his conduct, would ſo far diſgrace himſelf by envy and malevolence as to influence his judge by inſinuations, and with the moſt pointed rancour diſtinguiſh thoſe expreſſions and words which he vainly deems eſſential to the condemnation of his adverſary. It is but a bad cauſe that is in need of ſuch ſupport; but perhaps you imagined that every liberty was allowable, every art excuſeable which could be deviſed to deſtroy the reputation of the Profeſſor, and to " ſtrip him

of" what your friends or rather yourſelf call "his borrowed fame."

You have alſo adopted a very ſingular mode of ſpeaking of the perſon who accuſes you of ſtealing Badcock's Letters. Not ſatisfied to tell your reader that your feelings permit you not to mention his name, you add that this generous action of yours is "*in mercy;*" and, that the eye may pauſe upon the words, they are printed in Italics. You, however, recollected yourſelf, and apprehenſive the reader ſhould become forgetful of your generoſity of heart, and of your great and gracious "mercy," you tell him, in your errata, he ought to read not "*in* "*mercy,*" but "in mercy." Such a miſtake as this, Doctor, I cannot attribute to accident, it is undoubtedly the effect of deſign, and a more ſatisfactory proof of that ſpirit of malevolence which has dictated the whole performance.

I am far from doubting the authenticity of the letters of Dr. White, or of ſuſpecting that

that fraudulent meaſures have been uſed to obtain or publiſh them; but you will excuſe me if I add, it is myſterious to me you do not tell the public where the originals can be peruſed, and in whoſe poſſeſſion they are. It is an omiſſion which will admit of no apology; never were letters publiſhed without a previous declaration of their authenticity, and a requeſt to thoſe that doubt to compare them with the originals.

I would adviſe you, Dr. Gabriel, to forbear extolling your own praiſes in the public papers; the impartial world will not be influenced by ſuch meanneſſes, but they will rather ſuſpect that thoſe who have the bareface to aſſert you have written your pamphlet with the ſpirit of candor and of gentility *, are actuated by leſs generous and leſs noble motives than thoſe of friendſhip and liberality. We know too well the depravity of the age, not to he ſenſible that the moſt

* Vide St. James's Chronicle of the 3d of November, and other papers.

upright

upright of characters are expoſed to the darts of malevolence; and we cannot but ſuſpect, that ſhould the badneſs of your cauſe be in want of advocates or ſhameleſs ſupporters, you can have reſource to the uſual mode of defence, and, ſhielded under the name of an anonymous writer, dart the weapons of malice, and the ſhafts of virulence indiſcriminately againſt the weakeſt as well as againſt the moſt powerful of your antagoniſts. Such an expedient you know, Dr. Gabriel, would not prove more diſgraceful than the preſent mode you have adopted; and experience has already taught us, that to the wildneſs of deſpair, and the fury of diſappointed envy, nothing appears too extravagant, nothing too arduous.

You have dwelt with particular pleaſure on the converſation that paſſed between you and Dr. White, on the 28th June 1788, and you have advanced ſomething, that according to your own inſinuations, does not redound much to the honor of the Profeſſor, both as a man of honor, and as a clergyman. But, Doctor, we cannot decide

cide till Dr. White himſelf explains the whole more fully, for from you we cannot expect a ſatisfactory account. The language of bold effrontery, and the officiouſneſs of pretended friendſhip, may often extort from the unthinking ſome improper expreſſions; and no doubt to ſuch cauſes we are to attribute the warmth of the Profeſſor. It was no poſitive refuſal of payment, no illiberality of ſentiments; and though you inſinuate that you "found rather the ſagacity of a "*well managing* attorney," to uſe your own words, "than the ſimplicity of an academical "recluſe, or the liberality of a gentleman," we will not, like yourſelf, ſuſpect Dr. White of want of honour, or ſuppoſe him loſt to all principles of integrity. If your aſperities obliged him to anſwer you with merited roughneſs, was it any reaſon you ſhould deem yourſelf juſtified in expoſing in the Univerſity what had paſſed in ſeeming confidence between you? This, which you deem a proof of diſhonor in White, is in you the moſt convincing inſtance of your paſſionate temper and over-bearing conduct; and while

you

you glory in attacking the moſt ſenſible part of the Profeſſor's character, you unfortunately, and unmeaningly no doubt, do but the more glaringly expoſe your weakneſs, betray your want of integrity, and call down upon your head the cenſure of the whole world.

The Univerſity, I may confidently aſſert, to one man, are ſenſible of the injury you have offered to Dr. White, the meritorious author of the Bampton Lectures; and, far from ſuppoſing, with yourſelf, he is guilty of meanneſs, they believe him deſerving of every encomium, and riſing, like the innocently accuſed maidens of antiquity, more virtuous, more amiable, and more admired from the fiery ordeal to which you have expoſed him. Rather than cenſure or ridicule him for the diffidence which marks his character, and the negligence which attends his affairs with the world, all commend him; far from thinking theſe indelible vices and unpardonable faults, the public admire them, and like the paſſionate though judicious lover, that believes the mole on the lovely

neck

neck of his miſtreſs not a blemiſh but rather a beauty, they pay due reverence to greatneſs, and merited eulogiums to ſuperiority of talents.

I am at a loſs to conceive how you can anſwer not only for what you have produced, but for what you wiſh to produce. Can there be found, among thoſe who may be your zealous friends, any one who will juſtify this expreſſion, which occurs in page 81? —"I "may not have told all that I know of ano-"ther kind." There is a meanneſs in it beneath the dignity of a clergyman; and however juſtifiable you may in deluſion think your conduct, I am ſure every one will acknowledge there is too much reſentment in the expreſſion to believe your proceedings honourable, and too much apparent depravity of mind to ſuppoſe you can be influenced with the reſt of mankind, by liberality of ſentiments, and integrity of intentions.

I have already ſpoken of your vanity, Dr. Gabriel, and indeed it may be of ſome ſer-

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vice to your future conduct to enlarge a little more upon this favourite and conſpicuous frailty of yours. Diſcipline you know metamorphoſes the raw uncouth peaſant into the nimble and alert ſoldier, and the bittereſt liquors often become, by proper treatment and attention, ſweet and palatable. Not ſatisfied to tell us in your firſt page you were Doctor in Divinity, (a once dignifying title, which we muſt confeſs is now as much proſtituted to ignorance, as female beauty to the luſt and wantonneſs of the debauchee) and that ſome years back you were Fellow of Worceſter College, Oxford, you continue imperceptibly to inform the reader of your great conſequence. You talk of your pariſh church in Middleſex; and that the ignorant reader may not quietly conclude you are the rector of only one pariſh, you take care to date a letter from Harlington rectory, and further to inform him that the octagon chapel at Bath is yours; where, in that ſeat of elegance, pride and faſhion, you tell us you deliver your diſcourſes to a moſt reſpectable congregation, and where, as Pope ſays,

" To

" To reſt, the cuſhion and ſoft Dean invite,
" Who never mentions hell to ears polite."

As to the bond found in Badcock's papers, every ſound lawyer will tell you, Doctor, that White could not be forced to diſcharge it; and therefore it is no wonder your ſolicitations, and I may ſafely add, your threats, to oblige him to pay the money, incenſed him to ſay in the warmth of paſſion, " you " wiſhed to pick his pocket."

Granting that the aſſiſtance the Profeſſor received from his friend of South Molton was conſiderable, and even granting that Badcock expected to be rewarded in the moſt handſome and liberal manner by the Lecturer, no one will be ignorant enough to aſſert that £.500 were a merited recompence. Neither the moſt flattering proſpects, nor the moſt hopeful and extravagant ambition, could induce Dr. White to ſuppoſe that the publication of his ſermons could clear him £.500; and it would be offering the groſſeſt inſult to a man's ſenſe and feelings to declare it was his intention to give

what actually was not in his power, and to pay what is neither lawful nor juſtifiable. We muſt therefore conclude, and we have the moſt evident and undeniable proofs to do ſo, that the bond of £.500 which Dr. White gave to Mr. Badcock, was not totally for ſervices received, but rather for ſervices to be received;—and farther we muſt acknowledge, that generoſity and a charitable diſpoſition are as conſpicuous in the Arabic Profeſſor, as excellence of genius and eminent abilities, when we recollect that he does not ſcruple to pay the ſum which he deems more due to the memory of his learned friend, and the diſtreſſes of his ſurviving family, than to the aſſiſtance or favours he received from his pen.

The melancholy death of Badcock may perhaps retard the publication of the Egyptian Hiſtory, but we may indulge ourſelves with the hope at leaſt that the Profeſſor will not ſo far ſacrifice his abilities to indolence, as to neglect to ſhew the world his labors are not ſtopped by the deceaſe of an individual,

and

and that the Roſcius of literature can act his part, or ſing his melodious notes, without the aſſiſtance of the mute, or the accompaniment of the harpſichord.

It was a known maxim with the ſubtle Mazarine, the celebrated miniſter of Louis XIV. he uſed to ſay, that with any two lines of a letter he could, by means of a few circumſtances atteſted by witneſſes, prove any perſon guilty of treaſon, or even of the higheſt crimes, and deprive him of his exiſtence at pleaſure. You have, reverend Doctor, imitated the example of this crafty ſtateſman, but not with ſo much ſucceſs, though perhaps not through want of proper inclination. Very luckily, on the contrary, your production of White's letters has effected what your little foreſight never apprehended; and the public, long miſguided by your frequent miſrepreſentations and fallacious aſſertions in newſpapers, as well as in private converſations, are at length happily enabled to remove the falſe colouring you had given to the Profeſſor's character, and

to

to judge from what they ſee, that he who can write ſo fluently, and yet ſo elegantly, deſerves a better reward than perſecution from the malevolent, illiberal remarks from the ſatyrical, ſhrewd and impertinent inſults from the puſillanimous and the ignorant.

It is far from my wiſh, Dr. Gabriel, to imitate your example, or to accuſe you of plagiariſm or impoſition upon the world. In the ſcale of ſcience your weight is too inconſiderable to command continued attention; and it would be but labor loſt to ſeek for the roſe amidſt briars, or in the middle of a ſtorm to ſpeak of the ſtillneſs of the waves, or the ſerenity of the ſkies.

The depth of an Œdipus is not requiſite to diſcover the character of your Facts, and to diſcriminate from beginning to end traits as diſcordant as they are fallacious. The impartial reader cannot withdraw his admiration from ſtriking paſſages and elegant expreſſions which now and then burſt out from among inſipid pages, and a more aukward though much labored diction, like

flaſhes

flaſhes of lightning from a dark, lowering, and threatening ſky. He who is acquainted with the manner in which your letters are in general couched, will eaſily recollect, if the idea did not ſtrike him before, that the ſame inſipidity, the ſame want of animation and of vigor, ſtill are conſpicuous in the Facts; and that the more brilliant parts, few as they are, proceed from the pen of a ſcholar who might have been better employed, and whoſe avocations, it is to be hoped, are of a more honorable nature than to ſwell the tide of malevolence, or increaſe the rapidity of envy and mean ambition.

There is no neceſſity to be more explicit on the ſubject, for fear your confuſion become too great, and your ſhame inevitable; for I believe, to tell the truth, the ambition of being one of the little vulgar ſcribblers of the age, has operated upon you more powerfully in the mighty production of the Facts, than the deſire to vindicate yourſelf, as you ſay, or to reſtore to Badcock the character which you tell us belongs to his abilities and eminent virtues.

Your

Your name, you need not be under any apprehenſions, will not immediately ſink into oblivion —without you, the ſcene that repreſents the Bampton Lectures cannot be called complete; and you may be aſſured, that however deformed you may be drawn, however hideous the repreſentation, there will be no need of diſtinguiſhing the picture by a particular mark, or in imitation of the painter who feared the ſpectator ſhould miſtake the ſpecies or quality of his animal, of writing underneath "This is Dr. Gabriel." The memory of your celebrated publication will, you may flatter yourſelf, ſurvive the preſent age; though I will not, for the honor of human nature, ſuppoſe that you can wiſh in your heart that it ſhould be remembered.

There is not mentioned in the records of time, an age or country but what has paſſed the higheſt and moſt merited encomiums on the character that has expoſed himſelf to dangers and inſults for the cauſe of truth and juſtice; but who is there that ſpeaks not

with

with indignation and abhorrence of the man, who, clothed in the garb of ſincerity and apparent zeal in defence of merit, gratifies his private appetites, and betrays the proſecutor and aſſaſſin, where he ought to appear the friend and the bulwark of virtue? I am far from ranking you with ſo hideous a monſter, though I could wiſh you had not given ſuch reaſons for your friends to be diſſatisfied, for your enemies to rejoice, and for the candid and the impartial public to cenſure your conduct.

If we do not attribute this unfortunate ſtep of temerity to private pique or diſappointed envy, we cannot find out words ſtrong enough to expreſs ourſelves; and indeed the moſt deſperate cauſe could not have opened the door to more reſentment or more meanneſs.—In this attempt to tear away the wreaths of fame and ſuperior excellence, which ſo well become the brows of the learned Profeſſor, we cannot believe you to be actuated with the ſame ſpirit as the Indians are; who, as Lord Bathurſt obſerved to

the bench of Biſhops, whoſe inveterate enmity was diſplayed in their proſecution of the celebrated Atterbury, ſuppoſed and believed they not only inherited the ſpoils, but even the qualities and all the virtues of any great man they killed in battle. No, Dr. Gabriel, we will not, we cannot imagine, you carried your views ſo far; for, even granting ſuch ſuperſtitious belief were well founded, the world would ſoon acknowledge that White's abilities would decay by tranſplantation, and his bloſſoms wither away, like the blooming tree that loſes all its fecundity when removed from a rich and fertilizing ſoil to a barren and ſolitary heath.

But after all, Dr. Gabriel, the world might be induced to forgive, though poſſibly not to forget, the odious attacks you have made on the literary as well as the moral character of the Bampton Lecturer, if by a recantation of what you have advanced, you would acknowledge the meanneſs of your conduct, and ſupplicate for pardon and pity from injured innocence. You ought ſurely

to

to have foreſeen there was ſomething contemptible in your meaſures, and that the charges you produced againſt White, could never do him any miſchief. While we expected diſcoveries important as well as intereſting, we are as yet but too fully convinced, that merit has its enemies, and that you are one of this moſt daring and deteſtable tribe.

But perhaps you envy the dignities and independence of the Profeſſor; and, diſſatiſfied with the little conſequence you tell us you have acquired at Bath and in Middleſex, you wiſh to riſe on the ruins of Dr. White, and adorn yourſelf with his ſpoils. This may be your ambition; but the degeneracy of the age is not ſo blind as to tolerate ſuch impudence.

You ſpeak of the college friends, whoſe good opinions you wiſh ſtill to continue yours; but, believe me, the ſteps you have lately taken cannot enſure you many adherents. Your mother univerſity, Dr. Gabriel,

is long ago ſenſible of the diſgraceful conduct of a perſon ſhe can no longer call a legitimate ſon; and were you preſent, ſhe might teſtify to you more effectually her reſentment and indignation. As for this it will ſuffice to ſay, that *there* no upſtarts, no calumniators find countenance. With us, the name of Dr. Gabriel had been involved in obſcurity; and now that he riſes "a hideous ſhape above the horizon," we could wiſh, when we view him as a clergyman, he were to ſink again into his natural inconſequence and merited oblivion. But alas! your pride, reverend Doctor, or more powerfully the indignation of the public, will forbid the fulfilling of this humane and chriſtian wiſh.

It were well you had recollected, that in abuſing the character of Dr. White, you offered the groſſeſt and moſt unpardonable inſults to the judgment and good ſenſe of his patrons. We know, and we are confident, the Archbiſhop of Canterbury, as well as the Lord Chancellor, will not reſent this affront; but

but do not forget that the child whom maladies or misfortunes attack, becomes dearer, and is more cheriſhed by the fond and indulgent mother. You have, unintentionally no doubt, paid a compliment to the taſte of theſe great and illuſtrious patrons; and while you wiſh to load with diſgrace and diſhonour the worthy object of their choice, you tell the public they are not only able but willing to recompenſe merit, and to crown with affluence the labours and undertakings of genius.

I will now take my leave of you, Dr. Gabriel; and, ſenſible as I am of the impropriety of your conduct, I will yet flatter myſelf ſo far, as to hope your blemiſhes will be corrected, and that you will acknowledge, that hurry of paſſion, and warmth kindled by oppoſition, inſtigated you originally to ſpeak lightly and ſlanderouſly of the Arabic Profeſſor's character and abilities; and that when once the aſſertions were made, and the report public, you deemed your reputation at ſtake if your charges were not proved,

proved, and your declarations corroborated, by any the moſt trifling evidence. Be ſatisfied with what you have done, and think not a ſecond time to intrude upon the patience and forbearance of an indulgent public. Remember that the lion, when once rouſed, will ſpare neither friend nor foe; therefore, by what is already done, provide againſt the threats of calamity; and beware the wound that is already made becomes not incurable by obſtinacy and improper treatment.

FINIS.

12. G. l.
6.